PELPUP NEWS

SUMMER EDITION 1982 Number 43

Produced by PELPOP

Pelham PUPPETS

Marlborough, Wiltshire

The
Pelpup Club

PELHAM PUPPETS
MARLBOROUGH
Wiltshire

Dear Pelpups,

Thank you for all the most interesting letters which you have sent me since the last magazine. Many of you seem to have been very busy with your puppet shows, which I am always pleased to hear about.

There has been an enormous response to the competitions, and as usual, the judging has been very difficult indeed, a real headache in fact. Another headache I got was from the little pieces of paper which floated to earth when I opened some of your competition entries! Please do write on the actual entry, the play or drawing, as I have said before, unattached names and addresses do get lost, or left in the envelope.

Here are the prize winners of the competitions in the last magazine:

1 Playwriting Competition

Liam Dolan from Liverpool, with 'The Brave Sailor'.
Ruth Genis from Hackney, London, with 'The Witch that brought Happiness'.
Alice Maunder of Crowborough with 'Star Wots'.

2 Photographic Competition

Cover photograph by Karen Rank of Shrewsbury.
John Jones from Long Buckby, Northants.
Simon Barnard from Herne Bay.
Christopher Knock from West Germany.

3 Cartoon Competition

Martha Williams of Bath.
Michael Warren from Rochester.
Kevin Hulse from Brick, N.J. U.S.A.

4 Good News, Bad News

Carol Blethyn from Basildon. Her entry reads –
Good News. . . I bought a new carpet which was in mint condition.
Bad News. . . . There was a big hole in the middle.
Charlotte Priestly from Cleethorpes –
Good News. . . I bought a big balloon shop last week.
Bad News. . . . We had to close because of inflation.

5 The ancient mathematician Competition

Gaynor Hesketh of East Ham.
Richard Manners from Bradley, Stafford.
Answer. The clue was in the word 'ancient', by using Roman numerals, you can take 1 away from 19 and reach an answer of 20.
XIX = 19 take away I, and you get XX = 20.
I would like to congratulate the entrant who worked out another solution. Take 1 MATCHSTICK away from 19 MATCHSTICKS, and with the remaining 18 you can make the word TWENTY. You try it. However, I am sorry, it was not the correct solution.

6 Titles

Robin Cooper from Telford.
Miss Robin Blasberg from Rockwell, Mass. U.S.A.
The Answers –
1 Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.
2 The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame.

3 The Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling.
4 The House at Pooh Corner by A. A. Milne.
5 Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson.
6 Great Expectations by Charles Dickens.
7 The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter.

I know that I made a mistake in the spelling of 'Grahame', as many of you pointed out. Thank you! I left out the final 'E'. Sorry, Pelpups.

Will the winners please write and tell me which puppet they would like as a prize, if you need a catalogue to help you make up your mind, I will send one. The prize can be chosen from any range of puppets except the vent puppet and No. 2 range.

If you are going to Cornwall for your holidays this year, and are near St. Agnes, go and search out the Little Puppet Theatre there. I read an article about it in a magazine, and it sounds most interesting. There are craft exhibitions on as well as puppet drama, so there is something to interest the not-so-puppet-minded in your family.

Further on in the magazine you will find A SPECIAL OFFER to Pelpups living in the United Kingdom. We are offering you the three Peanuts characters, Snoopy, Charlie Brown, and Woodstock, for the price of two of them. The price, £13.99, includes V.A.T. and postage and packing, and is really good value. We felt that this offer might be of help to those of you who are so short of characters, not to mention cash. After all, Snoopy could play the part of an ordinary dog, if you felt like it, (though I do not know what Snoopy will say to my suggestion of him being 'ordinary').

I hope you enjoy the magazine and the competitions. You will find these all listed together.

With best wishes,

P.S. We do not send receipts for the money you send for your subscriptions unless you send a stamped addressed envelope.
The next issue of the Pelpup News will be sent out at Christmas time.

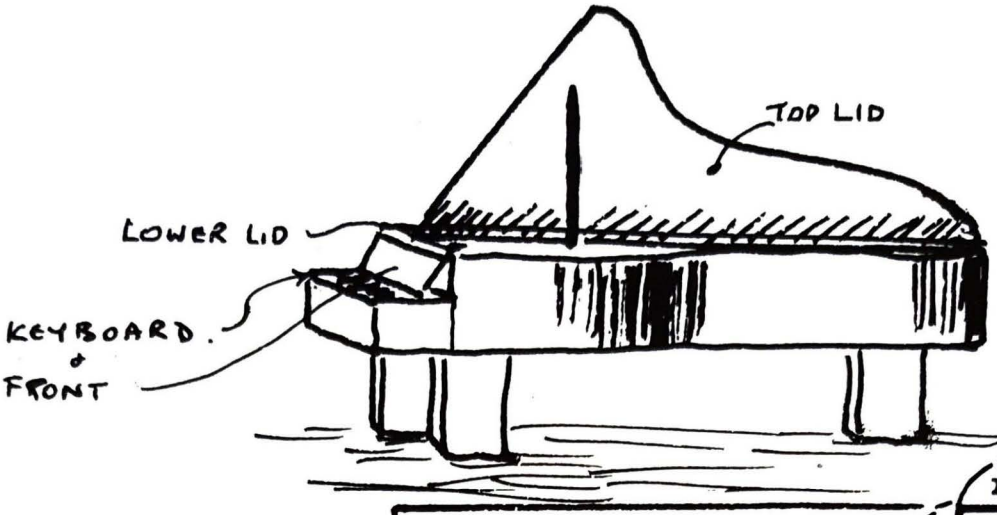
Competitions for Pelpup News No. 43

1 Playwriting A puppet of the winner's choice will be given for the two best original entries, and for the best ending to the sketch started in the feature on "Writing your own plays", which you will find in this magazine.
2 Photographic There will be three prizes for this competition. If one of the prize-winning entries is suitable, it will be used for the cover picture.
3 Cartoon Three prizes for the best entries. Please use black pen on plain paper.
4 Jokes This is a new competition. Many of you send in jokes, so we thought that we would have a competition for the best two we received. Question and answer type of jokes, you know the kind I mean, a question is asked, and the punch line of the joke is in the answer. Two prizes.
These four competitions are continuous, there is no closing date for entries. If your entry comes after we have judged the winners for No. 43 issue of the Pelpup News, then we shall put it aside for judging for issue No. 44.
5 How many words can you make from ENIGMATIC. Make a list and send it in. The winner will be the entrant who sends the longest list of correctly spelt words. In the event of a tie, the winning entry will be drawn.
6 The most unusual prop made from matchboxes. We DO NOT WANT YOU TO SEND THE PROP YOU HAVE MADE, a photo, or a drawing with a written description of how you made it, and what materials (including matchboxes) you used. Make your drawings simple and clear. One prize.

Closing date for these last two competitions – 20th November 1982.

A puppet of the winner's choice will be awarded for the winning entries.
Please do not forget to put your NAME and ADDRESS on each entry.

HOW TO MAKE A GRAND PIANO ~



You will need :-

1. 25 matchboxes
2. stout card 7" x 10" (the back of a drawing block will do)
3. Cornflake packet
4. Paint
5. Glue.

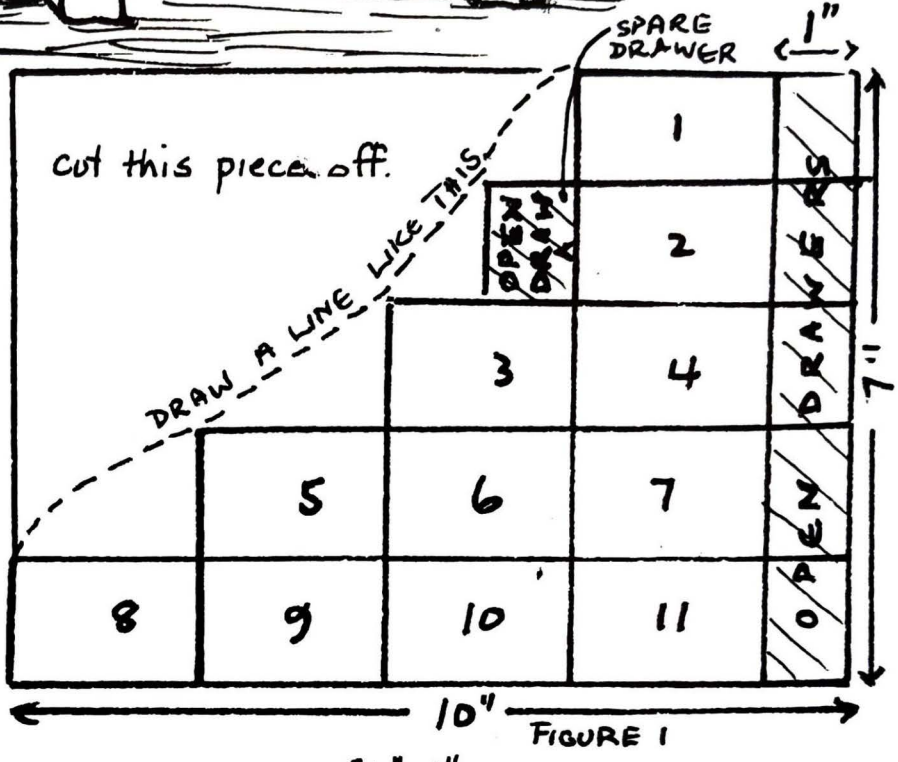


FIGURE 1

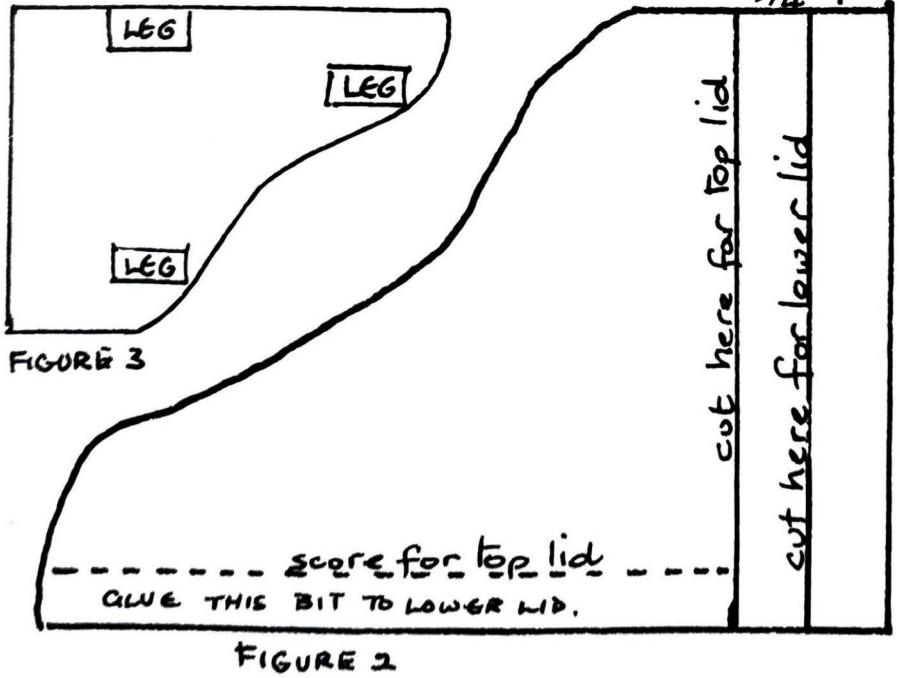


FIGURE 3

FIGURE 2

FIGURE 4.

Matchbox "Props"

Matchboxes are very useful for making your 'props', and, if you ask your friends and relations to save their empty boxes for you, you will soon have a large supply.

Below, you will find instructions on how to make a grand piano which I hope you will try and make.

A piano is particularly useful if you only have one puppet, for it provides you with an 'act'. The puppet can come on stage and perform his piece — the music is on a record or tape, of course. He can be a good pianist or a funny pianist — fall off his stool, do all sorts of things.

The items you need for the piano are listed on the page of diagrams.

Instructions:–

Draw a line on the stout card, 1 inch from one of the 7 inch edges.

Lay out 11 matchboxes as shown in Fig. 1, but with the drawers shut. Glue in position.

When glue is dry, pull the drawer of box 2 to the edge of the card, take out the drawer of box 3 and place in the 'spare' drawer place in box 2. Push a pin through it into the base card to hold it in position, while you draw a line touching all the box corners — See Fig. 1.

Cut along this line. If you are using a craft knife remember to place a piece of hardboard beneath the base card.

Cut the two big sides from the cornflake packet. Lay the shaped base card on them and cut two more pieces the same shape. Fig. 2.

Carefully measure and mark and cut from one a 1" strip, and from the other a 1¾" strip. Keep these. Fig. 2.

Glue the 1" strip to the base card beneath the 'open drawers'. Fig. 1. Now glue the top of the strip, pull out the drawers and press onto the glued strip.

Cut 3 pieces of cornflake packet card the same size as the open part of the 'spare' drawer.

Glue both sides of one piece, and slip beneath the open spare drawer — press down.

Glue the other two pieces together and stick to the top of the open spare drawer.

Glue 11 more matchboxes on top of first layer. glueing their sides as well. Pull the drawer of box 2 over spare drawer — glue in place.

Measure the depth of both layers of boxes, and from the narrow sides of the cornflake packet cut a strip or strips to cover curved side and the back of the piano. Cut another strip (one matchbox depth) to go around the open drawers. Do measure and cut accurately. Glue in place. Make sure the strips stick to all the corners of the boxes. Glue remaining 3 matchboxes on bottom of base card (See Fig. 3) for the legs.

Score top lid as shown in Fig. 2. Glue in place to lower lid.

Paint whole piano. Paint an orange stick and glue in place as prop for top lid. Use poster or acrylic paint.

Take the 1¾" strip — score lengthways. Draw keys on one half, paint the other the same colour as piano. Glue keys on top of open drawers and edge of painted half to the piano front. See picture of finished piano.

To make a stool take another 3 boxes. Glue the largest surfaces together — cover with a piece of material.

To make the stool more stable you could put a few pebbles in the 'drawers'.

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Becoming a Puppeteer

by Geoff Felix.

It seems that there is no magical formula to becoming a puppeteer. If you earn your living from puppetry, you will be considered a professional puppeteer. If you see that every star, every person on T.V., radio, video and disc started off as 'ordinary', then you can see that you might just as well be among them. What makes them special is that they had the skills and really worked hard to perfect them, the others didn't. There are few overnight successes, performers often go through years and years of work before they get any recognition. Some never get this at all.

At the moment there is very little 'puppet training' and most people are self taught and self employed. Indeed many of today's performers started as Pelpups. The pattern followed seems to be that would-be puppeteers start giving shows at school, where they can learn from mistakes and develop new skills. From school there are several choices:

1. They go directly into puppetry by leaving home and joining, as an 'apprentice', one of the few established companies — often for little pay and long hours. This is not easy as the competition is high.
2. They go on to higher education, perhaps studying Art, Design or Drama at College where the atmosphere or choice of project helps to develop their talents and interests as a puppeteer. This will need exam passes.
3. They get a job, any job, so that they can eat and live, and gradually build up their skills by performing in their spare time. As their reputation grows, their earnings from puppetry allow them to leave their first job and continue as a full-time performer. Doing two jobs means hard work, strong motivation and often a sympathetic boss!

There are several things to consider before starting. The first of these is that although desirable, and in the future possibly necessary, you do not need any exams! However, I would suggest you think long and hard about the future and what other knowledge, experience and qualifications you might need to fall back upon — especially if you want to go on to College. What you do need however are skills.

The basic idea behind going to school is to prepare people for 'life'. Now if this is hopefully going to be as a puppeteer, then your schooling should help you achieve this. It should be a tool to help you do what *you* want to do. So what will be of use?

Think of a show. How did you hear about it? The chances are that the puppeteer had prepared his own publicity, what skills did he need for this? You heard the show and saw it, was it recorded or live? Was it lit? Who wrote the story? How did the puppets look? How were they operated? How were they made? Think of all the skills used to put on a show and then learn them. If you are at school demand to know them!! Study those subjects that will help you and if you cannot get help at school, look outside to libraries, clubs, organisations and established performers. See as many professional shows as possible, seek advice and help, be critical and let your own efforts be criticised. The more practical knowledge you gain the better you will be able to build your own show later and the

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For the benefit of new members, the subscription of 50p or £1 entitles you to a badge and two years' subscription to the magazine—i.e., two or four magazines, one on joining, that is the current copy, and the next one or three issues. They come out in July and December. If you do not renew, you are still a member but you will not receive a magazine.
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better you will convince those around you that you are really serious!

When studying, consider those subjects that will help you. To my mind, anything involving communication is important because when you perform you must have something to say. You are also communicating when you write that final letter to demand payment or to tell someone how good your show really is. You must, therefore, have a good command of language. Art and craft skills also help because you will use these to build the show. Will you need to sew or use wood or metal? And what about music, will there be music in your shows? Once you have decided what is involved then you can best prepare.

The second thing you should consider before turning professional is — are you good enough? Puppetry is still a mystery for many people and probably you can already do things that are totally beyond the capabilities of your audience. But among your audience there might be a doctor or lawyer who has studied for years and years in his profession. As a 'professional' you should offer your skills in the same way as he would. Are you as good at your job as he is at his? He has paid his money to see your show and it must be worth it.

The third thing you should consider before becoming a professional is that you will probably be self-employed and this, in turn, is both good and bad. Get advice on this. You will be your own boss and free to do as you wish, which means self discipline and responsibilities like tax and insurance. This means being efficient, organised and able to do figure and paperwork. Another responsibility is to your fellow performers. If you charge less than them for a show because you do not need to live off the money, you are robbing them of their livelihood, and if your show is below standard, or late, or shorter than expected, your client may never book you or any other puppeteer again. Being self-employed means that you don't need a boss looking over your shoulder because you can be trusted to do everything yourself.

Technical skills and other aspects of puppetry have been written about again and again in books to be found in every library, and very excellent some of these are. Knowing about puppets however does not make you a puppeteer, it just makes you knowledgeable about puppetry. The only way to succeed is by practising. Every show you give will teach you about audiences, skills, ideas and, of course, timing. Your audience wants to enjoy your show or it would not be there. The audience is also your best teacher.

If you are prepared to work, often alone, and keep going against the odds, because you are dedicated to puppetry and its art, then you are already on the way to becoming a true professional. Good luck.

Pelpups Write

Stephen McGee from Folkestone writes — 8 "I am fifteen years old, and have been interested in your puppets since the age of twelve, and since then the interest has wavered a lot. Not long ago, I sold my puppets. How silly! But soon started again with Bengo, and it has been puppets non-stop from then onwards. I now have seven, and am very pleased with them all.

I think on behalf of many other Pelpups I should like to show my gratitude for the party at Hamley's of Regent Street. Well done. At the party I managed to get some free magazines, and these have helped me greatly. I am now buying timber for the stage that folds up in issue No. 28. My puppet group, although there is only me in it, is called ASTRA. MARIONETTE CO., and one day we, (I mean 'I') hope the group will become professional, but who knows??

Keep up the good work, you do it well, and I shall always support you!"

"P.S. Am I allowed to advertise your name and address in the box office or on stage?"

Yes, you may mention our name if you want to, Stephen, and thank you for the compliments.

Louisa Lim, 34 Buxey Lodge, 37 Conduit Rd., Hong Kong, writes to say "how nice it is to be in your club. My sisters and I own nine puppets altogether. We have done four puppet shows which were very successful.

We also have a stage which we can raise so we can do hand and string puppet shows with it.

Are there any other members who live in Hong Kong?"

Michaela Appleby from Capel-le Ferne, Nr Folkestone writes "We are a very new group of puppeteers, and one of our group, Colin Baker will be moving house at the end of this term, so things aren't going well for us really.

We are going to perform a play to the two younger classes in our school so we have been practising between chairs, but that won't do for the day of the performance.

John Pritchard from Cwmbran has sent me his design for a ghost — "Here is an idea which would be great if you could put it in the magazine.

HOW TO MAKE A GHOST.

Materials..... square of white cloth, 2 felt pens, white cotton, thin chain, 2 toy eyes, and mouth (felt), 1 yoghurt carton.

First empty the pens, and cut off the nibs. Make a hole in the end of each of the pen tops, and put on pens.

Make two holes, one on each side of the yoghurt carton.

Thread a needle with the cotton (doubled twice for strength), thread through the pen then the carton and then the other pen.

Double the cloth over to form a triangle, put the yoghurt pot body and arms inside and thread the cotton up through the folded corners. See diagram.

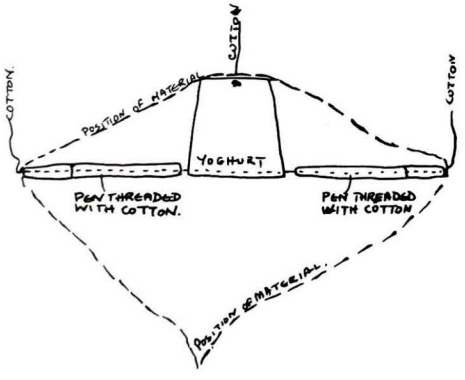
Tie ends of cotton to a thin strip of wood (the control).

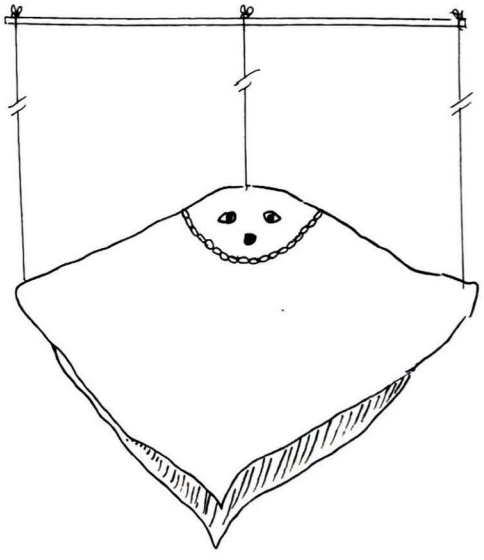
Thread another length of cotton (doubled twice for strength) tie a large knot in the end, and push needle up through the centre of the yoghurt pot, through the material, and tie in the centre of the control. Hang up your ghost and put the eyes and mouth on, then hang the thin chain around its neck. . . . . now you have a spooky ghost."

In his letter, John asks if we are ever going to make a German Sheepdog. Most unlikely, I should think, but here is why John wanted to know.

"I have a German Sheepdog called Miesha, and one day I had a puppet show at the top of my garden, and when I had finished, I put the puppets in their boxes and left them behind the stage while I went and had my dinner.

About 20 minutes later, I heard Miesha barking and growling. When I looked through the window I saw two boys jumping over the wall. They had tried to steal my puppets, but Miesha had stopped them."





Pierina Curties, from Queensland, Australia writes "I would like to say how good I think your club is. I received my first Pelham Puppet when I was about eight years old. I am now fourteen and I have five. My sister has four, and my mother has the baby dragon.

My latest puppet is Lulu, the Hawaiian dancer, who is unfortunately very much larger than the others, but she is a giant in my plays. I got her when I visited England last year.

I have done one puppet show at school, and that was three years ago. We used hand puppets mainly. Some friends of mine helped me. When we were doing the show, the girl who was controlling the microphone, yelled the stage directions into it once by mistake, and when we did the audition we were laughing so much behind the table (which we used for a screen) that I fell and cut my tongue!"

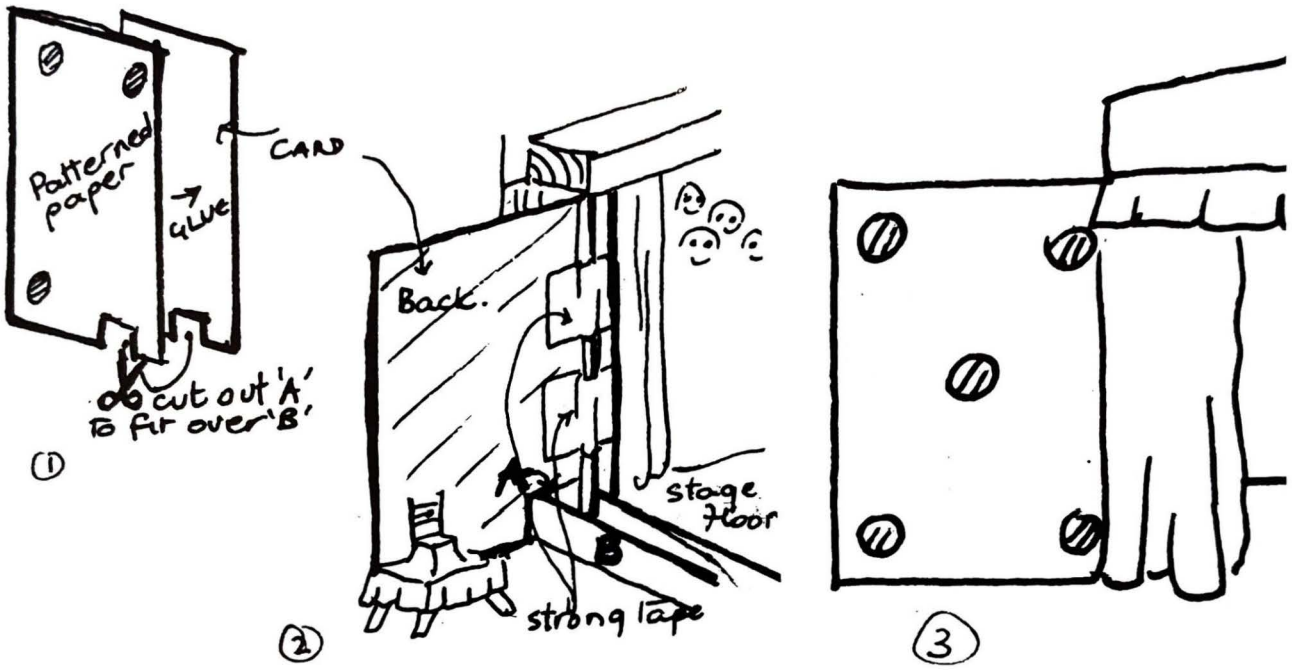
Alison Parsons from Tettenhall, Wolverhampton has a message for her penfriend, Trisitan Pineiro, in Spain, she says "Hello, Trisitan" and sends her best wishes.

Nicholas White from **Sheffield** has sent in the following idea for adding exterior side-wings to the Pelham Lightweight theatre, which I think is very good.

He writes "Stick some patterned paper onto two pieces of cardboard," (you can see from the diagrams the size of card you will need) "cut out a rectangular notch to fit over the base of the theatre. Diagrams 1 & 2. Diagram 3 shows the finished wings from the front."

Nicholas goes on "My grandpa helps me with my puppets, as he does Punch and Judy and magic at peoples parties. This gives me a head start, and my grandpa has many good ideas for me and my puppets.

Oh, by the way, he is called Uncle Fred at parties where he performs. Also, my grandpa has made me two superb thrones for the king and queen puppets, which look very realistic. One of the thrones, the king's is wider than the other, because the king is wider than the queen."



Michael Warren from Stanwell writes "I am really interested in puppetry, and like it very much, but most of the boys at school think it is a funny hobby to take up. I have made up my mind that I am going to take up puppetry as a career, whatever people say.

I am 11 years old, and I now have a total of 19 puppets, including four which aren't mine. My first puppet which I bought was the wicked witch, when I was five. I use our loft for my puppet shows.

I would like to know if you do any more props, like the drum kit on offer, e.g. a piano, a rocking chair, a table etc., which you can assemble yourself?"

No, we do not have any other props for sale. However you will find instructions on how to make a piano in this magazine, which I hope you will try. Good luck with your puppetry, Michael.

Bimbo. I use him to come round the front of the theatre and introduce the items, but sometimes he is in a play.

At the moment my friend and I are doing 'Cinderella', with two home-made birds as the Ugly Sisters. They really are funny. I am using Christmas tinsel to decorate the ballroom, together with cardboard tubes covered with gold paper for the pillars."

In his letter, **Robert Halcrow**, writing under great difficulties as the cat was sitting on him at the time, tells how he found out about the Pelpup Club. "In the playground at school, I saw that one of my friends, Simon, had some things in his hands, and I ran over to ask him what they were. I found out that they were a Pelham Puppet, and a copy of the Pelpup News. He let me look at them and I thought them fantastic. My Mum teaches at the same school, and I asked her whether I could have a Pelham Puppet. She said "What about having one for your birthday?", but that did seem rather a long way off, so she said I could have one sooner.

After this I kept going round to Simon's house. We got some of our friends together and made our own club." . . . . . .Robert seems to have had some difficulty in getting the puppet he wanted, the king, but in the end. . . . ."Mum phoned up Barratts and Johns, and they had got a king, and they would reserve it for us. And that is how I was introduced to the Pelpups, and I am glad that I was."

Michael Bayliss from Portsmouth, writes that his new company, Zodiac "has been a great success; bookings galore, and last year we made over 80% profit, and came in the top eight acts of a national talent contest.

The school I now attend has a huge drama studio, complete with at least twenty lights, always in use — plus extras, and a complete sound system. A puppeteers paradise, which has enabled me to design and build a new portable marionette theatre.

So far, we have performed two full scale productions — 'VARIETE' — a ninety minute show, where the whole studio was turned into a nightclub setting, like the 'Talk of the Town' in London, with the puppets ranging from twelve-inch glove puppets to life size body-puppets, appearing from all over the place, at one of the tables, in the band, as well as on the stage.

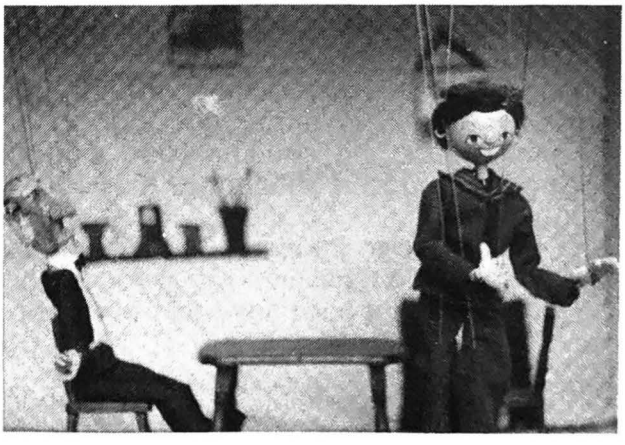
The other production was 'ALADDIN', a traditional pantomime, using two foot rod puppets on a conventional stage but with the scenery on trolleys for split second scene changes.

The casts of these two shows are now taking a well earned rest, in the storeroom, whilst in the workshop, three new productions are being built. 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat', a full musical production of 'Snow White', and, believe it or not, 'Annie' — yes, the hit Broadway musical.

As well as rod, glove and string puppets, ZODIAC also uses the black theatre techniques which are fast becoming popular, and we have already been booked up for two pantomimes for next Christmas, 'Dick Whittington', and 'Alice in Wonderland', the latter is an almost total black theatre production, and very exciting."

For those of you who may be wondering what 'black theatre' is — it is when the puppeteers wearing black gowns and hoods work the puppets before a black backcloth so that they are almost invisible to the audience.

SIMON BARNARD



JOHN JONES

A TRANSFORMATION PUPPET

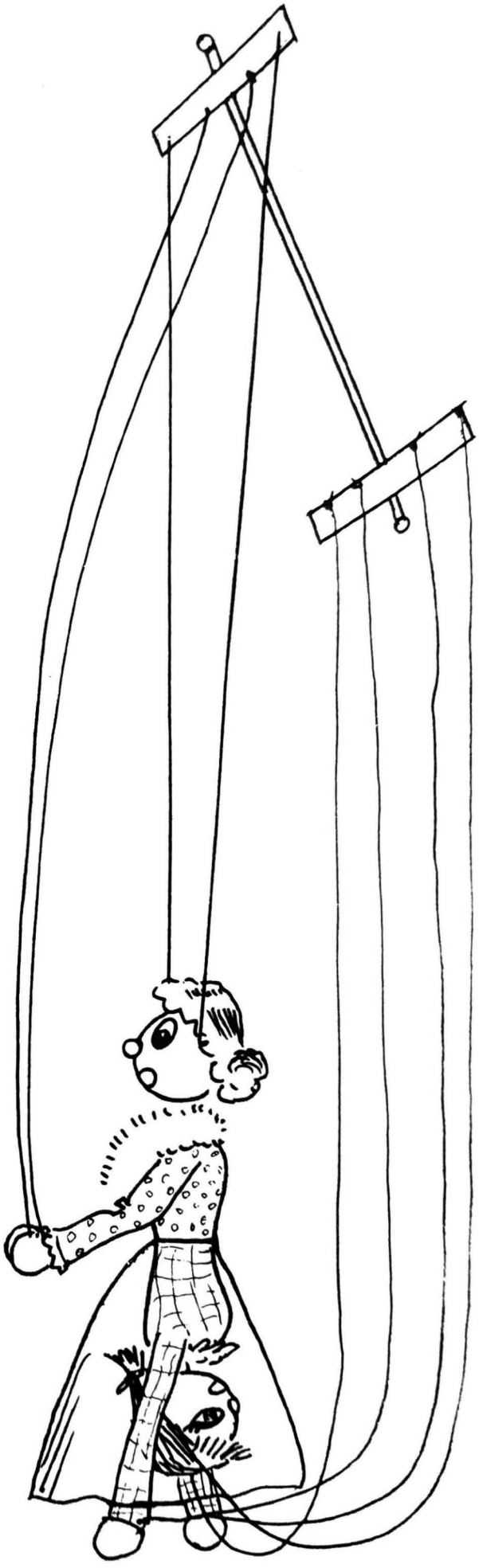
Here is a trick puppet which might be useful in a fairy tale story, where an old lady or witch has to be turned into a young and beautiful girl.

The diagram should explain the whole idea. It is really just two top halves linked together with a good heavy skirt in the middle, which ever way the puppet is turned the skirt drops down covering the lower half, and since the skirt is reversible, i.e., it is lined with another material, I suggest something soft and silky. She will then turn from an old lady in dull skirts to a young girl in bright silks. Warning, make the skirt very full, it turns inside out more easily, but if you still have trouble due to the material being a little on the thick side let in some lead weights round the hem.

From the diagram you will see the control consists of a long piece of dowel with a cross bar at either end. The distance between the cross bars should be as much as the height of the puppet. You do therefore require rather long strings in order to keep the bottom of the control from showing through your stage.

Just turn the control upside down and the transformation takes place. When turned into a young girl the old ladies hand strings can be used to make her walk.

John Pritchard's dog Miesha



POLKA
THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE

240 The Broadway Wimbledon London SW19 01-543 4888

9th June – 31st July	TREASURE ISLAND

Summer Holiday Programme:–

3rd – 7th August	Fuller Young People's Theatre presents WINNIE THE POOH
10th – 14th August	FESTIVAL OF PUPPETS. A week of performances by three different puppet companies.
17th – 21st August	Merseyside Young People's Theatre presents THE BIG YELLOW MONSTER
24th – 28th August	London Puppet Players present THE STORY OF BABAR
31st August – 4th September	A BULL CALLED FERDINAND

Details of times and prices of admission from Polka Theatre Box office.

There are plenty of things to do and see at the Polka Children's Theatre, so if you go to one of their performances, give yourself some extra time.

They also run activities and courses during the holiday period. You can get details of these by writing to the theatre – not us.

Penfriends

Claire Hickson, or Kionlough Cottage, Bride, Ramsey, Isle of Man, would like a penfriend from either Australia, Canada or the U.S.A. Aged 8-9

Jane Sheidow, of 60, Smith Ave., Delhi, Ontario, Canada. N4B 1B8, would like to hear from a 12-15 year old girl or boy, from anywhere except Canada. Jane is interested in art, pupper shows, drama and music. She skates, dances, plays basketball and baseball, cycles, and skis. She loves watching hockey.

Rebecca Clarke of Ramblers, 26 Pulens Lane, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants., would like a penfriend, a girl, aged 10, from Great Britain. Hobbies include Guides, stamp collecting, puppetry, and swimming.

Jane Woodley, 53 Raymonds Drive, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3AN, would like an English speaking penfriend from anywhere in the world. Aged 11-14. Jane's hobbies include: puppetry, roller-skating, stamp collecting, trampolining, postcards and badges.

Lucy Clift, 3, Rushfield Rd., Ware, Herts. SG12 7JH, would like a girl aged 11-13 for a penfriend, from anywhere in the world, except England. Hobbies – ballet, piano and violin playing, Guides and swimming.

Russell Bowes, 69, Wendover Rd., Eltham, London SE9 6PF, would like a boy or girl penfriend from Sweden, Denmark or Holland, aged 13-14, who likes reading, cookery, and drama, and who can read and write English.

Simon Leach, 29 Moorland Rd., Didsbury, Manchester M20 0BB would like an American penfriend. Boy or girl. Simon's hobbies include painting, drawing, puppetry, and music.

Emma Reeves, 34, Frogmill Spinney, Hurley, Maidenhead, Berks. SL6 5NN. Would like to hear from a girl aged 11-14 from the U.S.A. Hobbies – reading, writing, puppetry, and playing the violin.

David Springborn, 4519 Sourwood Lane, Richmond, VA. 23237. U.S.A. is very interested in Great Britain and would like to have someone British to write to. 10 years old.

Toby O'Handley, 31 Dahlia Street, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada. B3A 2R8 would like a penfriend, aged 11-14, boy or girl. Hobbies – collecting foreign coins, tropical fish, puppetry, postcards, working with handicapped children, sign language, and piano playing.

Bridget Motley, 16, Stonehill Rd., Gt. Shelford, Cambridge CB2 5JL, would like to hear from a girl, from any country in the world, as long as she understands and writes English, aged 8-12. Bridget's hobbies are Adam and the Ants, making up her Girls World model, Brownies, pottery, bike riding and hockey. At school her favourite subjects are reading, maths, art, drama and music.

Sonja Dittmas, Rt. 2 box 634, Cairo, New York, 12413, U.S.A., would like a penfriend from anywhere in the world, whose hobbies include animals, skiing, reading and acting. Aged 12 – a boy or a girl.

Pierinna Curties, 13 Brown Pde., Dorrington, 4060 Queensland, Australia, would like a boy or girl penfriend from anywhere, who can speak English, aged 13-16. Hobbies – puppetry, ballet, magic, volley-ball, stamp-collecting, Guides, tennis, drawing and swimming.

Alexis Josef Mizzi, 'Kehda' Lorenzo, Gafa' Street, Qormi, Malta, who is ten, and whose hobbies are reading, swimming and drama, would like to here from a boy of the same age from the British Isles. (Alexis writes very good English.)

Writing your own Plays

We receive many letters from club members asking whether we have a play for particular puppets — usually two or three seemingly unrelated characters, like a horse and a dragon, or a king and a poodle. It is seldom that we can help, and we have to suggest that you write your own play, so I thought you might like a few suggestions.

A play for two puppets. What can the plot be? Think of some everyday situations involving two people — eating a meal, going for a walk, playing a game, digging up the road, robbing a bank, decorating a room, having an argument.

No good for a dragon and a horse? Well I think you could make a very funny play out of a dragon and a horse having an argument.

Remember how popular Mickey & Minnie Mouse are — you never see real mice acting and talking as they do. They are animals doing human actions.

An argument is a good way to get your audience involved in the performance. Rather like the part of the pantomime where one character says "I didn't do that!" and the other says "Oh yes, you did!" Then the audience joins in as the two characters argue "Oh no, I didn't!" — "Oh yes, you did!" and on and on and on.

Another situation where you can get the audience to participate is when the actor (the puppet in your case) hears a funny noise. "What was that?" he asks. "A Ghost?" The audience can see the ghost or burglar, or whatever made the noise, but the actor never looks the right way at the right time. He then asks the audience to shout if they see the ghost whenever it appears.

Dialogue, the speaking parts are very important, they have to be used to tell the story, set the scene and create the atmosphere so that the audience knows what is going on, and where it is going on. Whether to be frightened or amused.

Let us take the theme of 'eating a meal', mentioned in the list of plots, and try to start a one act play for two puppets, which you can finish.

Characters:

Puppet A *(You can substitute your*
Puppet B *puppets for A & B)*

Scene: A kitchen. There is a stove with two saucepans on it. A table set for a meal and two chairs.

Puppet A is coming on stage as the curtain rises.

Puppet A: — "This is awful, what am I going to do? My friend will be here in ten minutes and the whole meal is a disaster. A DISASTER!"

(Puppet A goes quickly to the stove and on the way knocks over a chair or falls over the cat or trips over his feet. He looks in one saucepan.)

"The potatoes are burnt to a cinder."

(He looks in the other saucepan.)

"The peas are like bullets"

(He bends down and looks in the oven.)

"and the meat smells very peculiar, as for the jelly, it looks as though an elephant has sat on it!"

(he paces about the stage.)

"I must find something for our lunch which is fit to eat. Perhaps there is a tin of fruit in the larder?"

(He goes off stage — great rummaging noises are made by rattling pebbles in a tin very loudly.)

There I am going to stop and leave the rest to you. What will he find in the larder? Food or the other character, Puppet B. Or will his 'friend' be Puppet B, if so will he be pleased or disgusted by his lunch. Do we feel sorry for Puppet A because of his disastrous lunch or is he just stupid and careless? All these questions can be answered in what happens next. And remember to include plenty of action to keep the play alive.

Contacts

Sue Watson, of 36, The Warren, Billericay, Essex, would like any other Pelpups who live in Billericay, or nearby to get in touch with her.

Michaela Appleby, 22 Avondale Rd., Capel-le Ferne, Nr. Folkestone, Kent, wants to know if there are any young playwriters in the Folkestone area, who would like to contact her.

Holly Hiscock, Quarry Bank, 61, Quarry Hill, Tonbridge, Kent, would like to meet other Pelpups living in that area.

Vanessa Smith, 165 Lightfoot Road, Hornsey, London N8 7JH, wants anyone interested in puppets who lives in the Hornsey area of London to get in touch with her. Vanessa is 10½ years old.

Frazer King, 133 Clarkin Rd., Fairfield, Hamilton New Zealand, would like any Pelpup living near him to contact him.

Stephen McGee, 33d, Julian Rd., Folkestone, Kent, would like Pelpups living within the Folkestone area to get in touch with him.

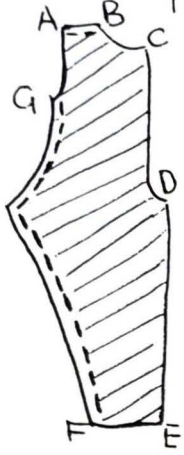
Michael Bayliss, 18, Woodham Rd., North End, Portsmouth, Hants., would like members living in the Portsmouth area to contact him.

Miss Stitcham
of 9 Threadneedle
Street
Wareham

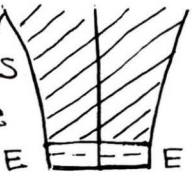
Explains how to
make a Clowns
dress

FULL SIZE PATTERNS
ON NEXT PAGE
[Trace onto separate paper
before cutting out.]

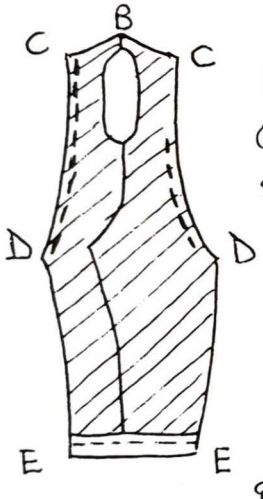
[N.B. Where the patterns are shaded
the inside of the material is showing]



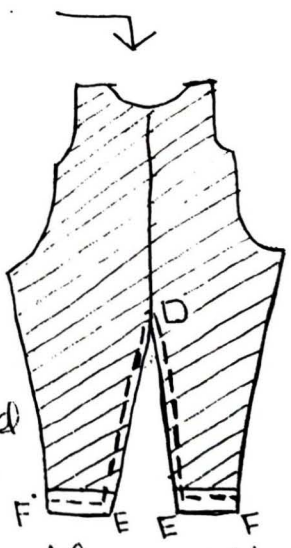
First cut four pieces as pattern on next page
Also cut two pieces as arm pattern Place
these body pieces together
in pairs, outsides inwards
& sew along, in each case
seams AB & GF
Now open out, though they wont
lie flat &

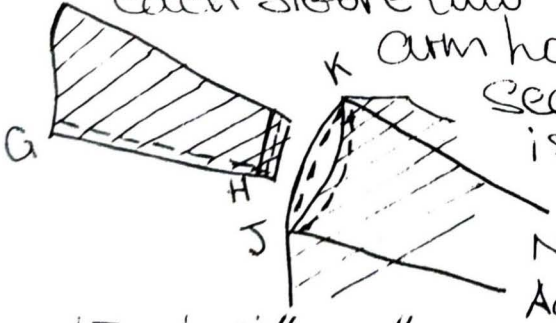


→ turn up trouser
bottom & sew
along E-E
[Make sure both
pairs are same
length.]



Now, while open, place these two pairs
together (with outsides innermost.) & sew
along seams CD, one is the centre back
seam (leaving top part open) & the other
front seam
Next, fold flat like this
& sew along the inside
trouser seam EDE.
Cut out the two arm
patterns. Hem their cuffs
& sew up seam G.H. The sleeves
should now be inside out. Pass
each sleeve into the appropriate
arm hole & sew round
seams JKJ This
is probably best
done with needle & thread.





NOW TURN RIGHT WAY ROUND & PRESS.
Add a ruff — a piece of bright
material 2½" × 12" drawn in by thread round neck.

TERN
2

CLOWN DRESS PATTERN CUT 4

The Witch that brought Happiness

by Ruth Genis

Characters

MOTHER *(USE OLD LADY)*
FATHER – Jack *(USE GEPETTO)*
GIRL – Milly *(USE TYROLEAN GIRL)*
WITCH
FROG

(The play takes place in the kitchen of a cottage. There is washing scattered about and an ironing board if possible.)

MOTHER: Dear, dear, I have such a lot to do today. There's the dinner to cook, some shopping to do and I have washing and ironing to do too! I shall have to ask my lazy daughter and my good for nothing husband to help me. Milly come here.

MILLY: Yes mother *(yawns)*

MOTHER: will you go to the shops and buy me a tin of custard?

MILLY: Oh mother, do I have to?

MOTHER: Yes, otherwise you'll have no supper tonight.

MILLY: Oh, alright.

(Exit MILLY *in a huff)*

MOTHER: Now Jack! Jack where on earth can he be?

(Enter JACK *slowly)*

JACK: Oh what is it woman, you never stop moaning.

MOTHER: I want you to do some ironing.

JACK: IRONING!!! You must be joking. You'll never catch me ironing.

MOTHER: Oh wont I? If you don't do the ironing there'll be no dinner for you tonight.

JACK: No dinner? Alright I suppose I must.

MOTHER: While you do that I'll go to the launderette in town. And make sure you do it properly.

(*Exit* MOTHER)

JACK: Women, they're all the same, do this, do that. Now where is this ironing? Oh silly woman she forgot to tell me HOW to iron. I'll just leave the iron on the shirt, perhaps that's how you iron. Now then I think I'll just have 40 winks and . . . . . *(he falls asleep)*

(WITCH *floats down*)

WITCH: Mmmmm. . . . This looks a nice comfortable place for a holiday, better than looking at the same cave and cauldron day in, day out. Oh there's someone coming, I must hide.

(WITCH *stands behind a chair*)

MOTHER: Jack, where are you, you lazy man. (*she sniffs*) What's that smell, it smells like burning. Oh my, that stupid man has left the iron on the shirt and now there's a big hole. Oh wake up, wake up!!! *(she shakes* JACK. *He doesn't move)*

(enter MILLY)

MILLY: Hello mother, I'm back and I've got the shopping.

MOTHER: Where's the label from the tin?

MILLY: Oh it fell off when I dropped it.

MOTHER: I hope it's the right flavour. Let me taste it. Agghh Agghh w-what is it?

MILLY: Mustard, mother.

MOTHER: Mustard? Mustard? Why did you buy mustard?

MILLY: Because you told me to.

MOTHER: Custard child, custard. I asked you for custard not mustard you stupid girl. Now go to bed at once. Jack wake up. *(she shakes him)* Oh it's no use.

(MILLY *exits)*

WITCH: *(whispering to audience)* I think I'll take her place if I am hard on the other two they will become good slaves to fetch and carry for me. First I must get rid of the mother. HOCUS POCUS DIDDY PEER MAKE THE MOTHER DISAPPEAR.

(MOTHER *floats up and exits*)

Now you lazy man wake up *(she points a finger at* JACK *and he wakes up)*

JACK: What? Agh who are you? WHAT are you?

WITCH: How dare you. My name is Grezelda and I'm on holiday in your house.

JACK: Where is my wife? What have you done with her?

WITCH: Well, lets say she has been temporarily disposed of. Now I'm the boss around here and you are going to do everything I say and for a start you can make me some dinner.

JACK: But I don't want to, I'm tired.

WITCH: If you don't, I'll turn you into a frog.

JACK: You wouldn't dare!

WITCH: Oh wouldn't I? HOCUS POCUS DIDDY POG, TURN THIS MAN INTO A FROG

(JACK *floats away, frog floats back*)

FROG: Please *(croak)* turn me back *(croak).*

WITCH: Do you promise to do everything I want?

FROG: Yes *(croak)*

WITCH: Alright then. HOCUS POCUS DIDDY PAN. CHANGE THE FROG BACK TO A MAN.

(FROG *floats away,* JACK *floats back*)

Right make me some dinner.

JACK: Of course.

(*exit* JACK)

WITCH: MILLY come here you lazy girl!

(*enter* MILLY)

MILLY: Yes mother. MOTHER!!! Are you ill, you've gone a funny colour.

WITCH: It's because you never help me, go and make the beds.

MILLY: Yes mother, if it will make you feel better.

(exit MILLY)

WITCH: Oh it's so boring here, I should have gone on that package tour to Transylvania like all the other witches did. But no, I had to be different and come to this grotty dump. Oh I'm fed up, I'm going home. I suppose I ought to bring the mother back even though those two don't deserve her. HOCUS POCUS DIDDY PAC, COME ON MOTHER COME ON BACK.

(MOTHER floats down)

I'm off to Transylvania like any normal witch.

(WITCH *floats off*)

MOTHER: Oh I feel as if I've been asleep all day. MILLY come here dear.

(*enter* MILLY)

MILLY: Yes mother dearest? I've made the beds. Oh you look much better now. Would you like me to do the washing up?

MOTHER: Washing up? I look better? What's going on?

MILLY: Well you went a funny colour and I thought you were ill because I never helped you. Is that true?

MOTHER: Well, it's true you never help me, but I don't remember going a funny colour. Well maybe it's all for the best, I can see you've changed. Where's your father?

(*enter* JACK)

JACK: Here I am dearest wife. I'm glad you're back!

MOTHER: Back? Oh what's been going on?

JACK: Don't you worry your pretty little head about it my dear, just you have a rest.

MILLY: Yes, have a rest.

JACK: Tomorrow I'll get a job so you won't have to work so hard to keep me and Milly. Anything you want my dear?

MOTHER: Er no I don't think so. What's got into you two?

JACK: Sense my dear, SENSE.

CURTAIN

Star Wots

by Alice Maunder

Cast

KING THING — TED THE BOY
DORIS THE DRAGON — WITCH WOT
BONES THE SKELETON

SCENE ONE: *The Throne Room.*

KING: I'm bored. I know, I'll make up a rhyme about my favourite subject .....me. Mmmmmm The best of kings am I mmmmmmmmm On land or sea or sky ...mmmmmmmmmmm mm My subjects cheer when I appear mmm mmmmmmm mm And wave as I pass by!! Oh yes! That is very good.

(*Enter* DORIS THE DRAGON)

DORIS: Hey! KING THING. WITCH WOT's stolen my cave.

KING: What's that?

DORIS: That's right. She has stolen my cave.

KING: Who?

DORIS: No. WOT.

KING: I thought you knew. It's your cave.

DORIS: Yes, but it's been stolen.

KING: Ah! By whom?

DORIS: WOT

KING: YOUR CAVE!!!

DORIS: No. WITCH WOT.

KING: What witch?

DORIS: WITCH WOT.

KING: Who?

DORIS: No! WOT.

KING: Oh, WITCH WOT.

DORIS: Yes.

KING: WITCH WOT has stolen your cave?

DORIS: Yes.

KING: Oh dear, I've heard of her.

DORIS: What, of WITCH WOT? When?

KING: The other year. She put a spell on my cousin that made him one-legged. Hopping mad he was. Mmmm Mmmm Mmmm. I think I need a knight.

DORIS: There is no time to think it over. I need help now.

KING: No, I mean a knight with a 'K'.

DORIS: A knight with a sword would be more like it.

KING: Well, I haven't got either. Just that stupid boy of mine, but I'll do what I can.

DORIS: I'd rather you just 'did' WOT.

(*Enter* DORIS) (*Enter* TED THE BOY)

TED: What's the time?

KING: No, WOT's a witch. Are you a witch-whacker?

TED: A what whacker?

KING: That's right. A WITCH WOT whacker. Can you whack WOT, and get DORIS's cave back?

TED: Do what?

KING: That's right. 'Do' WOT! Go on, clear off, and don't come back before it is done.

(TED *makes some gesture of confusion*)

End of SCENE ONE *(Play taped music to allow time for scene change)*

SCENE TWO WITCH WOT's cave.

(TED *enters*) (BONES *is sitting quietly in the corner*)

TED: Well, at least I know where the whacky WITCH lives. OOH! What's that sign say? WOT's Goings on!

BONES: That's right. . . .Oo be you a-poking about WITCH WOT's domain?

TED: My word, who is this poor starved soul. He's nothing but string and bones.

BONES: I've not been well lately.

TED: Did I hear you say you were the doorman?

BONES: No, I said DOMAIN, WITCH WOT's domain, and I am her sentry.

TED: Oh well, these things are sentry to try us! Can you give her a message.

BONES: Yes.

TED: Right. That's cleared up then. I'll be on my way now.

BONES: Wotcher mean?

TED: Is she? I thought so.

(*Enter* WITCH WOT)

WOT: Who's making all the noise out here?

TED: He is. He was telling me how mean WITCH WOT is.

WOT: Was he indeed. What exactly did he say?

(BONES *shivers with fright*) TED: Oh, just that WITCH WOT was mean. He was going to say more, when you got nosey.

WOT: I'm what?

TED: Nosey.

BONES: No, she means she is WITCH WOT.

WOT: No I don't. . . . . Oh, this could go on for ever. You are a very rude boy, BOY. What is it that you want?

TED: That's right, I want WOT.

WOT: Well, I'm WOT.

WOT: Certainly.

TED: Right. Well. . . Mmmmm. . . .

WOT: If you want a spell, you will have to cross my palm with silver. Anything more, and it will have to be the Lone Ranger.

TED: No. No. I'm the KING's page-boy, and he wants to know what is going on.

WOT: That's right. WOT's going on. Today this cave, tomorrow the world.

TED: Even. . .* *(* insert a place of your own choice here. Such as the address where you are performing the play)*

WOT: Especially. . .*

(TED *faints*)

WOT: The fool has fainted. Give me a hand BONES.

(BONES's *hand on its own moves towards the WITCH. You will need an extra string tied to his hand to do this.)*

WOT: No no, you fool. Use your head.

(BONES's *head moves towards* WITCH)

WOT: Arrgh! I should have known. I'll have to zap him awake.

ZAP! (*hits* TED *with her broom*)

TED: Oooooh! Mind what you are doing with that broom. Cor. (*looks at* BONES) he is looking a bit strung out. . . (*turns to* WOT) You were saying, that you were going to take over the world.

WOT: That's right.

TED: But that's mean.

WOT: Of course I'm mean. How would you feel with a name like WOT? Having endless jokes made about you.

TED: How did you get such a name anyway?

WOT: When I was born, my mother showed me to my father, and said "This is your daughter". He said, "That's what", and WOT's what I have been ever since.

TED: Can't you change your name?

WOT: I asked my father once, and he said, "If you can find a complete fool, he can change your name for you and change you into an honest housewife".

TED: I think you'd make a nice Mitzi.

ZAP!!!!

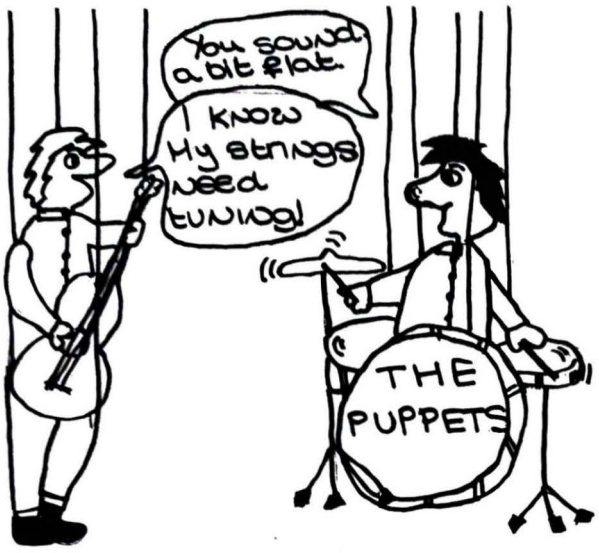
(Change MITZI *for* WITCH *with special effect noises off stage)*

TED: Hey! Fame at last. Hi MITZI!

End of SCENE TWO *(Music while scene changes)*

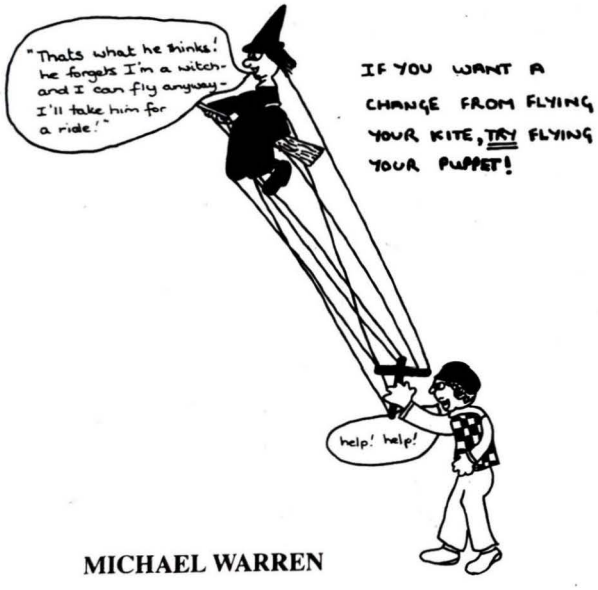
SCENE THREE *The Throne room*

*(*KING *on throne.* TED *enters)*



MARTHA WILLIAMS

SCOTT NORWOOD


"Thats what he thinks! he forgets I'm a witch- and I can fly anyway- I'll take him for a ride!"
IF YOU WANT A CHANGE FROM FLYING YOUR KITE, TRY FLYING YOUR PUPPET!
help! help!

MICHAEL WARREN

KEVIN HULSE

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